

WHY SOME INVENTORS FAIL

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GREELEY & McINTIRE

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THESE Little Booklets are printed for the Information and Instruction of Inventors in the things they ought to know. They do not put up a Vociferous Appeal for Business. But those who read them Carefully will know more about us.
G. & M.

Why Some Inventors Fail

Useless Inventions

There are thousands of inventions that serve no useful purpose, that offer something the world does not want, that present new and improved means for doing something that is not worth doing at all, or that produce results for which there is only a small, scattered and infrequent demand. Of course in these cases the inventor gets nothing. Equally, of course, he should have known or discovered the facts in advance.

Cost and Economy

Too many inventors lose sight of the matters of cost and economy of operation. A machine that does not effect an economy or produce a "new and useful" or improved result has no value, though it may show a

very high order of mechanical knowledge and inventive ability. Utility is the test of the dollar and cent value of any invention.

Demand

Far too little consideration is given to probable demand, to the questions, "Does the world need the invention I have in mind?" "Is it cheaper or more useful?" "Will it produce a new or better result?" "Will it answer more purposes and so reach a wider market?" Disregard of these things means failure, or, if success is attained at all, success based on mere luck. The inventor should always inform himself on these questions so far as he can.

Failure to Market

Inventions of merit often fail through the inability of the owner to get them to market. This may be his own fault or the result of circumstances. It is not always an easy thing to do. If the inventor is without means he should, where practicable, interest some friend or acquaintance to the extent of the cost of the patent and also to the extent of money enough to make samples of the articles, or to make at least one working machine. The more steps have

been taken toward actual manufacture the easier it is to get capital. If the inventor desires to sell, he can get practically nothing for an unpatented invention, frequently something for the invention patented, and a good deal more for an interest in a patented, demonstrated, working invention than he could get for the whole of it undemonstrated.

Development Always Advisable

Many inventors hesitate to sacrifice an interest in order to demonstrate practically what they have on paper or in their heads. Their inventions, among them some of great merit and value, die of dry rot in consequence. Wherever practicable, develop an invention, even at the cost of an interest, instead of trying to sell it without development. You will make more in the end. Inventors have missed millions in profit by taking the opposite course.

Misplaced Confidence

Misplaced confidence, disclosure of the idea to the wrong people, frequently means the total loss to the originator of a valuable invention. Attorneys, even disreputable attorneys, seldom misappropriate the inven-

tion. This is done at an earlier stage by persons to whom it is disclosed, or through their description of it to others. Absolute safety lies only in getting it into the Patent Office as early as possible, it being usually impossible to avoid more or less disclosure.

Disclosure Before Application

Showing the invention to a professional draftsman, model maker or attorney, or to a trusted friend, is one thing, and disclosing it, before application, to a speculator or manufacturer, is another. The former will probably keep the inventor's secret, the latter may use it. The Patent Office invariably keeps it.

Risk of Delay

Every day that the inventor who has perfected a valuable improvement delays the filing of his application, he is running an increasing risk, as many a man knows to his sorrow. It makes no difference whether the man who steps in ahead of the first inventor has stolen the idea or invented it later. It means in either case an expensive additional proceeding, with the chances usually against the rightful applicant, or a total loss.

Getting Capital

A good many inventors think, or rather dream, in six or seven figures. They expect the capitalist to look them up and make out a check. He is willing to make more money, but he is not enthusiastic, and he is usually busy. Patent your invention first, demonstrate it and develop it as far as you possibly can, and then go after him. If you have something good, and it is in his line, he will want you as much as you want him.

Opportunities Never Wider

Seven figures have been realized on a good many inventions. Opportunities were never better or wider than today. The same successes can be repeated in a hundred lines of industry, but not without protecting the invention first, and using practical sense and some business intelligence afterward. Sitting on inventions does not hatch profits.

Attorneys—Cost of Inferior Service

It is probable that the employment of attorneys who aim to get a "patent" without regard to its quality, the extent to

which it protects the actual invention, has been one of the most expensive of inventors' mistakes. The saving in first cost has been small, often nothing at all, but the ultimate cost can be figured in tens of millions. If the invention is worthless it makes no difference who the attorney is or how he does his work. If it is valuable it makes a great deal of difference.

Patent All Useful Ideas

Go to the Patent Office with every idea that is useful and practical. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because the idea is simple it is therefore unpatentable. Some of the best among patented inventions are the simplest. If everybody says, "Why didn't somebody think of this thing before?" the chances are that it will pay. In the average case and in the long run this practice gets results. Neglect of it has benefited the public and deprived inventors of justly earned profits, to a tremendous amount.

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Prepare applications for United States Letters Patent, carefully and thoroughly, after examination of "the state of the art."

Prosecute such applications thoroughly, faithfully and persistently, securing for the inventor the best claims and all the claims to which he is entitled.

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